

causing documents (or other piles) to overlay each other. In automatic creation, a pile may be generated by a tool in the document Workspace which looks for and retrieves documents according to some predefined criteria.

In this section, Card is simply stating how documents are added to a pile. It does not state that the user may set the alignment between windows within a pile.

In fact, a "pile" in Card is defined by the fact that the alignments between the documents in the pile are handled automatically. Specifically, a new document is positioned "one quantum farther in radius from the center of the pile" when a new document is added to the pile (whether that document is added manually or automatically). (see col. 10, lines 29-31). The only way to ensure "one quantum" in radial positioning is for the system to automatically align the documents. Thus, if the user drops the document on the pile but it is not "one quantum" from the other documents, it will be shifted by the system to properly align it at the "one quantum" position.

In addition, Card indicates that, "each document in the pile will be visible." (Column 10, line 35). Thus, the user is not permitted to align the documents in a pile such that one document would completely obscure another document. If a user attempts to align the documents in this way, it would appear that Card would shift the documents so that no one document completely obscures another document. Thus, the system automatically aligns the documents in a pile and does not allow the user to position documents in a loose stack.

Thus, although users may add documents to piles automatically, the definition of a pile requires that the documents within a pile be aligned automatically. As such, Card does not show both an ordered stack of windows in which the windows are automatically aligned and a loose stack of windows in which the alignment between the windows is set by a user.

The Final Office Action also disagreed with Applicants' argument that Card does not show a component that replaces a

focused task with an image of a focused task by citing column 8, lines 34-36. In particular, the Examiner stated that the limitation to replacing a previous focus task with an image of a previous focus task is shown when the WebBook of Card is reopened, because it automatically opens to the last page viewed. Applicants respectfully dispute this assertion.

Although Card does show that the WebBook is bookmarked so that the last page that was viewed will be displayed first when the WebBook is reopened, it does not show a step of replacing a previous focus task with an image of the previous focus task. Under Card, when the WebBook is closed, the image of the opened page is replaced with an image of the cover of the WebBook. Thus, when the WebBook is stored, you can not see an image of the page.

Thus, it is clear that the page is not being replaced with an image of the page. When the WebBook is reopened, the WebBook is simply placed back in the same state that it was in before it was closed. There is no statement in Card that this is achieved by storing an image of the state that the WebBook was in before it was closed while replacing the WebBook page that was displayed with an image of the WebBook page that was displayed. Thus, it is clear that Card does not show or suggest a step of replacing a previous focus task with an image of a previous focus task.

Based on these arguments, Applicants assert that claims 1-17, 19-30, 37-38, and 40-42 are patentable over the cited art. Since the same reasons for rejecting the claims were maintained in the Final Office Action, Applicants have included their earlier arguments below regarding those rejections for the sake of completeness.

EARLIER PRESENTED ARGUMENTS

The following references were used alone or together to reject claims 1-17, 19-30, and 37-41:

Card et al. (U.S. 5,838,326, hereinafter Card)

Sugiyama et al. (U.S. 6,002,403, hereinafter Sugiyama);

Marrin et al. (U.S. 5,808,613, hereinafter Marrin);

Matsuda (U.S. 6,346,956, hereinafter Matsuda);

Windows NT 4 Workstations ("Windows NT"); and

Horvitz et al. (U.S. 5,880,733, hereinafter Horvitz).

None of these references shows or suggests the inventions of independent claims 1, 20, or 37. As such, all of the pending claims are patentable over these references taken alone or in any combination.

Claims 1-17, 19, 20-30 and 42

Independent claim 1 provides a method of generating a display. The method includes displaying a three-dimensional environment and at least two tasks in the environment. Each task is capable of including an image of at least two windows with at least one task comprising an ordered stack of windows in which the windows are automatically aligned and a loose stack of windows in which the alignment between the windows is set by a user. Movement of one of the tasks is displayed in response to input from the user.

Independent claim 20 provides a computer-readable medium with components that are able to display a three-dimensional environment and at least two tasks, each containing images of at least two windows. At least one task comprises an unordered stack of at least two windows and a loose stack of at least two windows. A move task component moves one of the task images in response to input from a user.

None of the cited references show a task with an ordered stack of windows and a loose stack of windows as found in claims 1 and 20.

In the Office Action, it was asserted that Card showed tasks as piles of individual web pages, a document collection

and/or a WebBook. However, none of the collections of documents in Card provide both an ordered stack of windows and a loose stack of windows.

In particular, a document pile does not provide both an ordered stack of windows and a loose stack of windows. Instead, it only provides an ordered stack of windows in which the alignment of the windows is automatically determined. (See Column 10, lines 36-49 of Card).

Similarly, the WebBook in Card does not provide both an ordered stack and a loose stack. Instead, it provides pages in a Book metaphor where the pages are automatically positioned within the book.

Thus, none of the document collections provided in Card suggest having both an ordered stack and a loose stack of windows in the collection. Since the other cited references also fail to show providing both an ordered stack and a loose stack in a task, the combination of references does not show or suggest the invention of independent claim 1 or independent claim 20 or claims 2-17, 19, and 21-30, which depend therefrom.

Claims 37, 38, 40 and 41

Independent claim 37 provides a computer-readable medium with components that display a three-dimensional environment having a stage and at least one task containing images of at least two windows. A movement component moves the task toward the stage and a conversion component converts the task into a focus task when the task reaches the stage. A focus conversion component converts a previous focus task on the stage into a converted non-focus task. The focus conversion component comprises a snapshot component that is capable of replacing the previous focus task with an image of the previous focus task.

None of the cited references show or suggest claim 37 because none of the references show a snapshot component that replaces a focus task with an image of the focus task..

In the Office Action, it was asserted that Card showed such a component in FIGS. 2a and 3 and at Col. 7 lines 33-39 and

63-67. However, none of the cited sections of Card show a component that replaces a focus task with an image of a focus task.

At column 7, lines 33-39, Card states that if a WebBook is selected from a bookcase, the WebBook in the focus space will fly to the bookcase. However, Card does not say that the WebBook in the focus space is replaced with an image of the WebBook. In fact, at column 8, lines 32-36, Card indicates that when a WebBook is not active, it is represented by a cover of the WebBook. Thus, it appears that Card does not capture an image of the WebBook when it moves to the bookshelf but instead replaces the WebBook with an image of a cover associated with the WebBook.

This is substantially different from the present invention in which an image of the task is captured. By capturing an image of the task, the present invention captures the current layout of the windows in the task. This can help a user to recognize a task by allowing the user to recognize the layout of the windows.

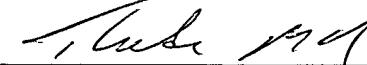
Note that Card never mentions replacing a document collection with an image of the document collection. As such, Card does not show or suggest the invention of claim 37, either alone or in combination with the other cited references. Claim 37 and claims 38, 40, and 41 are therefore patentable over Card and the other cited references.

Conclusion

In light of the above remarks, claims 1-17, 19-31, 34-38, and 40-42 are patentable over the cited art. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

WESTMAN, CHAMPLIN & KELLY, P.A.

By: 

Theodore M. Magee Reg. No. 39,758
Suite 1600 - International Centre
900 Second Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-3319
Phone: (612) 334-3222 Fax: (612) 339-3312